

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /137 W

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R 051637Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8485

UNCLAS BERN 4931

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: FEDERAL COUNCILLOR ELECTIONS

1. IN ELECTIONS ON DECEMBER 5 TO REPLACE THREE OF THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE SWISS FEDERAL COUNCIL WHO HAD RESIGNED OCTOBER 1, THE PARLIAMENT ELECTED WILLI RITSCHARD (SOCIALIST REPLACING TSCHUDI), HANS HUERLIMAN (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT REPLACING BONBIN) AND GEORGE-ANDRE CHEVALLAZ (RADICAL DEMOCRAT REPLACING CELIO). ELECTIONS PRESERVED "MAGIC FORMULA" UNDER WHICH ALL MAJOR PARTIES PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT.

2. THE PARLIAMENT ESSENTIALLY VOTED FOR CONTINUITY, MODERATION AND EXPERIENCE. AS HAS BECOME ALMOST CUSTOMARY, IT REJECTED ALL THREE OF THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATES OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED. THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATES WERE ALL PARTY WHEELHORSES AND IN TWO CASES WERE VIEWED AS SOMEWHAT MORE "RADICAL" THAN THE PARTIES THEY REPRESENTED. THE NEW COUNCILLORS ALL APPEAR WELL QUALIFIED WITH EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE AT THE CANTONAL AND FEDERAL LEVEL.

3. MINISTERIAL POSTS WILL BE REALLOCATED BY AGREEMENT AMONG MEMBERS OF THE NEW FEDERAL COUNCIL AFTER IT CONVENES IN NEW YEAR. NO UNUSUAL DEPARTURES IN GOVERNMENT POLICIES ARE EXPECTED.

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4. PARLIAMENT ALSO ELECTED FEDERAL COUNCILLOR ERNST BRUGGER
AS PRESIDENT OF CONFEDERATION FOR 1974 AND FEDERAL COUNCILLOR
PIERRE GRABER WILL BE VICE PRESIDENT.
DAVIS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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